

言外知识的自主学习——一项针对中国翻译专业硕士口译学生的调查研究

魏钊凌

指导教师：陈青教授

厦门大学

学校编码：10384

学号：12020131152768

分类号_____密级 _____

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言外知识的自主学习
——一项针对中国翻译专业硕士口译学生的调查研究

Extra-Linguistic Knowledge Autonomous Learning:

A Survey on Interpreting Students of MTI Program in China

魏钊凌

指导教师姓名： 陈 青 教 授

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Abstract

The international interaction of various industries in China is increasingly facilitated by her status as the second largest economy in the world. Interpreters with specialized knowledge, in particular, serve as an indispensable impetus to the course. They are expected to be erudite both in linguistic knowledge and in extra-linguistic knowledge (ELK). The mastery of the latter requires professional and would-be interpreters to be guided by interpreting trainers on the one hand, and to accumulate relevant knowledge through long-term autonomous learning on the other hand.

In the research, the author probes into ELK autonomous learning by students of Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI) in China. The result shows that the students are somewhat capable of learning ELK autonomously. They prefer to use memory strategies and social strategies to learn ELK, but are unfamiliar with the application of affective strategies. The author also discovers that the most popular areas of ELK are Economics and Finance, while Agriculture and Other Natural Science are overlooked by the students. Meanwhile, the study indicates that ELK-related courses promote students to schedule their plans of ELK autonomous learning, and help them find out how to learn ELK better. Finally, according to the research, students who enjoy ELK-related courses have broader horizons when they learn ELK through autonomous learning, compared with those who do not.

The paper is divided into five chapters. In Chapter 1, the author elaborates on ELK and autonomous learning concerning their definitions, features and roles. Then the significance, the methodology and the purpose of the research are introduced. In Chapter 2, western and Chinese research on ELK and autonomous learning is talked about. In Chapter 3, the author discusses the definition and the features of learning strategies, as well as their significance to autonomous learning. Meanwhile, as the theoretical foundation of this research, Oxford's theories of language learning strategies and his Strategy Inventory for Language Learning are introduced. Chapter Four focuses on the survey in the research. Its purpose, respondents and procedure as

well as the design of the questionnaire are introduced, and the results are analyzed with the help of SPSS 20.0 and Microsoft Excel. Sequentially, by reference to the theories of learning strategies, the author proposes a series of suggestions to cultivate students' ability of ELK autonomous learning. In the last chapter, the author concludes the research, points out its limitations, and raises suggestions for possible follow-up studies.

Key words: extra-linguistic knowledge; autonomous learning; interpreting; learning strategies

摘 要

随着中国成为全球第二大经济体,国内各行各业国际间交流正在飞速发展,具有行业专门知识的口译人才成为了促进此类交流所必不可少的推助力。口译员必须同时拥有优秀的语言知识和言外知识,才能够胜任专门行业内的口译工作。要掌握充足的言外知识,一方面须依靠口译培训机构与口译专业院校的引导,同时也要求口译学员与职业译员长期自主地积累与学习。

基于以上背景,本研究对中国翻译硕士口译专业的学生如何通过自主学习获取和积累言外知识进行了调查和分析。调查研究显示,翻译硕士口译学生具有一些自主学习言外知识的能力,较为倾向于使用记忆策略和社交策略学习言外知识,但不太善于在言外知识的自主学习中使用情感策略。本研究还发现,翻译硕士口译学生涉猎最多的知识领域是经济与金融领域,而对农业与其他自然科学领域则较少问津。最后,研究结果表明,言外知识的相关课程对翻译硕士口译学生在自主学习言外知识的时间规划与有意识地提升自身学习言外知识的能力这两个方面有着积极的影响;同时,接受言外知识课程训练的学生,在学习言外知识时涉及的知识领域,比没有接受相关课程训练的学生更宽广。

本论文共分为五章。第一章论述了言外知识与自主学习的定义、特点与其各自的功能,并阐明了本研究的意义、方法与目的;第二章介绍了中西方学者对言外知识和自主学习所做出的相关研究;第三章阐述了自主学习策略的定义、特点及其在自主学习中的重要性,同时对本研究的理论基础——Oxford 的语言学习策略量表及其理论进行了介绍;第四章对本研究所采取的问卷调查进行了阐述,介绍了调查的目的、对象、问卷设计与实施步骤,并使用 SPSS 20.0 及 Excel 对调查的数据结果进行了分析;同时,结合自主学习策略的理论,对如何提升学生的言外知识自主学习能力提出了建议;第五章总结了全文,指出了本研究存在的不足,以及未来与之相关的可研究方向。

关键词: 言外知识 自主学习 口译 学习策略

Table of Contents

Abstract	I
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Research background	1
1.1.1 Interpreting.....	1
1.1.2 Extra-linguistic knowledge	2
1.1.3 Autonomous learning	6
1.2 Research significance	9
1.3 Research methodology	10
1.4 Research purpose	11
Chapter 2 Literature Review	12
2.1 Research on extra-linguistic knowledge	12
2.1.1 Research on extra-linguistic knowledge in the west.....	12
2.1.2 Research on extra-linguistic knowledge in China	14
2.2 Research on autonomous learning	15
2.2.1 Research on autonomous learning in the west.....	16
2.2.2 Research on autonomous learning in China.....	17
2.3 Summary	19
Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework	20
3.1 Learning strategies and autonomous learning ability	20
3.1.1 Definition of learning strategies.....	20
3.1.2 Three categories of learning strategies	21
3.1.3 Relation between learning strategies and autonomous learning	23
3.2 Oxford's theory of language learning strategies	25
3.2.1 Language learning strategies.....	25
3.2.2 Six categories of language learning strategies	26
3.2.3 Strategy Inventory for Language Learning.....	30
3.3 Learning strategies in this research	31

Chapter 4 Survey and Analysis	34
4.1 Research purpose	34
4.2 Research respondents	34
4.3 Research methodology	35
4.3.1 Description of the questionnaire	35
4.3.2 Procedure of the survey	37
4.4 Results and analysis	37
4.4.1 Descriptive analysis of background information	37
4.4.2 Descriptive analysis of learning strategies	39
4.4.3 Analysis of the areas of ELK in autonomous learning	47
4.4.4 Correlation Analysis	51
4.5 Discussion	52
4.5.1 Research results	52
4.5.2 Research implications	53
Chapter 5 Conclusion	55
5.1 Major findings	55
5.2 Limitations and suggestions	57
Appendices	58
References	66
Acknowledgements	71

目 录

摘要.....	III
第一章 概述	1
1.1 研究背景	1
1.1.1 口译.....	1
1.1.2 言外知识.....	2
1.1.3 自主学习.....	6
1.2 研究意义	9
1.3 研究方法	10
1.4 研究目的	11
第二章 文献综述	12
2.1 言外知识的相关研究	12
2.1.1 国外对于言外知识的相关研究.....	12
2.1.2 国内对于言外知识的相关研究.....	14
2.2 自主学习的相关研究	15
2.2.1 国外对于自主学习的相关研究.....	16
2.2.2 国内对于自主学习的相关研究.....	17
2.3 小结	19
第三章 理论框架	20
3.1 学习策略与自主学习能力	20
3.1.1 学习策略的定义.....	20
3.1.2 学习策略的分类.....	21
3.1.3 学习策略与自主学习的关系.....	23
3.2 Oxford的语言学习策略理论	25
3.2.1 语言学习策略.....	25
3.2.2 语言学习策略的分类.....	26
3.2.3 语言学习策略量表.....	30

3.3 本研究中的学习策略	31
第四章 调查与分析	34
4.1 研究目的	34
4.2 研究对象	34
4.3 研究方法	35
4.3.1 问卷设计	35
4.3.2 调查步骤	37
4.4 调查结果与分析	37
4.4.1 对调查对象背景信息的描述性分析	37
4.4.2 对学习策略的描述性分析	39
4.4.3 对自主学习知识领域的分析	47
4.4.4 相关性分析	51
4.5 讨论	52
4.5.1 研究结果	52
4.5.2 研究影响	53
第五章 总结	55
5.1 论文小结	55
5.2 研究局限性和对今后相关研究的建议	57
附录	58
参考文献	66
致谢	71

Chapter 1 Introduction

The first chapter gives an introduction to the research. The author starts with the definition of interpreting and interpreting aptitudes. Then the definition and the significance of extra-linguistic knowledge (ELK) are discussed. Afterwards, the author talks about the definition and the features of autonomous learning. In the end, the author states the significance, the methodology and the purpose of the research.

1.1 Research background

In this section, the author gives a brief introduction to interpreting, extra-linguistic knowledge (ELK) and autonomous learning as defined in the previous studies. Firstly, the definition of interpreting and the interpreting aptitudes are introduced. Then the author elaborates on the definition of ELK and its significant role in interpreting. Finally, the definition of autonomous learning and the factors affecting autonomous learning are expounded.

1.1.1 Interpreting

Interpreting, as Pöchhacker (2004) defines, is a special form of “Translation”. The difference between interpreting and translation resides in immediacy. By “immediacy”, he means that the output of target text in interpreting, unlike what happens in translation, is presented along with (in the case of simultaneous interpreting) or right after (in the case of consecutive interpreting) without much delay (ibid).

Interpreting represents a complicated one-time process of discourse comprehension and production. In the phase of comprehension, the message of the source text, which is presented in the form of phonetic flows (except for sight translation and sign interpreting), is received by the interpreter through his or her auditory system. The interpreter then recognizes words and phrases in the verbal flow and sequentially converts them into information packages. Alongside the first phase,

information is elicited from the verbal package through mental or cognitive processing. In some cases, the source text is provided to interpreters in written form, and thus the message is received through the visual system. Both of the two processes are referred as interpreting.

In the phase of production, in terms of consecutive interpreting, the information is transformed into written notes, short-term memory and working memory, which are re-presented as the target text later on. In terms of simultaneous interpreting, meanings extracted from the source text are transcoded into the target text in a second, while the auditory channel and brain system constantly work on the upcoming verbal flow at the same time.

Obviously, it requires interpreters of particular skills and qualities to accomplish such a complex process. AIIC suggests that a person is qualified to be a professional interpreter only when he or she has:

(a) Complete mastery of the active (target) language(s), i.e. the language(s) into which the interpreter works; (b) in-depth knowledge of the passive (source) language(s), i.e. language(s) from which the interpreter works; (c) university degree or equivalent; (d) sound general knowledge and understanding of current affairs; (e) ability to analyze and construe facts; intuition; (f) speed of reaction and ability to adapt without delay to speakers, situations, and subjects; (g) powers of concentration; (h) above average physical and nervous staying-power; (i) pleasant voice and public-speaking skills; (j) high degree of intellectual curiosity; (k) intellectual integrity; (l) tact and diplomacy. (Bernstein & Barbier, 2000: 224)

Included with all the aptitudes listed above, general knowledge, precisely extra-linguistic knowledge, plays a significant part in interpreting.

1.1.2 Extra-linguistic knowledge

The distinction between linguistic knowledge and extra-linguistic knowledge is

somewhat ambiguous, since information is conveyed and processed mainly through abstract thought, which is usually represented in the form of language (刑福义 等, 2010). Therefore, the first step of clarifying the concept of extra-linguistic knowledge is to “deverbalize” it.

1.1.2.1 Definition of extra-linguistic knowledge

Researchers believe that knowledge represents structured information units in the long-term memory. They are connected with each other and evolve into networks, which are called schema, frame, script, et al. (邵志芳, 2013). Based on the schemata theory, cognitive scientists describe the process of comprehension as follows: when an individual receives a message, it stimulates the existing information network in his or her brain, and links between the new information and the old information units are created. As a result, the information network in his or her brain is updated. This new information network stands for the comprehension of the received message (冯忠良 等, 2010).

In interpreting, ELK refers to the nonlinguistic information units stored in interpreters' long-term memory and can be activated by the source text in interpreting. It consists of two parts: prior knowledge and situated knowledge. The former refers to the information about the outside world in people's mind, including general world knowledge, expert knowledge, background knowledge, cultural and social protocols, et al. Situated knowledge, on the other hand, means the information about the interpreting circumstances and the information that interpreters acquire from the discourse context, such as the time and place information, the conference theme, the gist of source texts, the type of the speech, the status and background of speakers and listeners, and their relationship, et al. The knowledge is situational to a particular interpreting occasion.

Prior knowledge is acquired through everyday accumulation and pre-task preparation. In the process of interpreting, it is activated by the message conveyed in source texts. Seleskovitch argues that “to interpret one must first understand” (赛莱斯科维奇, 1979: 69). The comprehension of the message is achieved through the

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